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THE PERFORMANCE PRACTICE OF ORGAN-PLAYING
IN 17TH CENTURY FRANCE ACCORDING
TO THE ANONYMOUS MANUSCRIPT
MANIÈRE DE TOUCHER L'ORGUE (C. 1670-1685)

French organ music of the 17th century is quite difficult to interpret due to the fact that, apart from the notion of *beauty*, we must be aware of another “non-music” idea connected with these types of pieces: *bon goût* (Eng. *good taste*), a common notion appearing in French musical treatises of the second half of the 17th and 18th centuries. The French-language authors usually use this term when they write about those performance aspects which could not be defined by means of strict rules. According to Jean-Louis Le Cerf de la Viéville, *good taste* (*bon goût*) was a combination of *internal feeling* (*sentiment intérieur*) and *rules* (*règles*) (Le Cerf de la Viéville 283-284). The reference to *good taste* was also a convenient way to justify all changes and aberrations from generally accepted performance conventions and composing rules (Chung 183).

The focus of this article is the manuscript *Manière de toucher l'orgue dans toute la propreté et la délicatesse qui est en usage aujourd'hui à Paris*, now kept in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal¹. It was probably written between

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¹ Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms. 3042, fol. 100-119. This source was published as a facsimile in the series edited by Jean Saint-Arroman (*Méthodes et Traités*). In 1986 William Pruitt prepared an English translation (*A 17th-century French Manuscript 236-251*).

1670 and 1685², by two anonymous authors who had close connections with the Parisian circle of liturgical organists. Also, some scholars point out that the second anonymous author, who completed the work of the first one by adding the last page (fol. 119), worked on the manuscript more than a decade later, even as late as the beginning of the 18th century (Glaenzer 87). Consisting of 199 double-paged sheets—the numbers were added by the librarians analyzing this manuscript in 1884 (Egan-Bufferet, *Manuscript Sources* 1)—it includes five different texts, which were in fact copies of other existing works: (1) *Traité de la composition* by Nivers, (2) *Traicté de musique* by Adrien Le Roy, (3) *Autre traité des modes de musiques* (the anonymous author), (4) *Discours sur la musique*, where in many aspects we have parts of another text: *L'art d'accompagner sur la basse continuë pour l'orgue et le clavecin* by Nivers and (5) *Manière de toucher l'orgue*³.

Manière de toucher l'orgue is a very important source of knowledge for scholars interested in French liturgical and musical practice of the second part of the 17th century. Most of those who analyze this text (Pruitt, “Un traite d’interprétation” 99-111; Glaenzer 87-102; Egan-Bufferet, *Manuscript sources*) claim that it does not deserve to be called a treatise, since, for example, it has not been printed, for reasons unknown today. Also, we have observed a great deal of chaos and negligence in its layout and content (Pruitt, “Un traité d’interprétation” 99). We might conclude that the author of the first part of the manuscript (fol. 100-118) was writing it down quite hastily (perhaps using another source, or writing down remarks dictated by another person); as a result, we can identify “primitive syntax and careless handwriting” (Buch) see Example 1. The last page of the manuscript (fol. 119), however, seems to be completely different, and was written by another anonymous author. His handwriting is more careful; there are also many comments regarding liturgical aspects, so we can assume that he had obtained a theological education.

² Jean Saint-Arroman claims that this manuscript was written around 1670 (*Méthodes et Traités*), but according to David Ponsford it could have been written around 1685 (32).

³ The content of the manuscript (ms. 3042) I quote from the article by Marie Egan-Bufferet (“Le cantus firmus” 55-56).

No

Maniere De Toucher L'orgue
 Dans toute la propreté et la
 Delicatesse qui est en vŕage
 aujourdhy a Paris

Du prelude

pour Toucher le prelude dans sa der-
 niere perfection il se doit jouer grave-
 ment et fort doucement car ces ŕcy
 on il faut se couŕter jouer et gouter
 la douceur des accords toute fois il
 ce doit Toucher hardiment on ne peut
 le Toucher trop doucement pour veü
 que la mesure y soit regullierement
 observée cela joint au agrement et
 a la maniere de les faire rend
 les piece incomparablement
 plus belle ces ce que j'espere Exp-
 rimer ~~sur~~ le plus quil me sera
 possible sur le papier ce qui est
 beaucoup plus facile par la pra-
 tique

Example 1. The first page of the manuscript *Maniere de toucher l'orgue*
 (Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms. 3042, fol. 100)

The most important advantage of this manuscript is that it gives plenty of information on the musical and liturgical aspects of worship in the 17th century. We must be aware that in Nivers' time organ music (which coexisted with monodic practice during the celebration of mass or *officium divinum*) was the most typical style of polyphony in French liturgy (particularly in Paris). Surprisingly enough, while in other European countries the essential factor of liturgical music was vocal polyphony (*prima practica*) or vocal and instrumental compositions (*secunda practica*), in France we encounter a peculiar model based on the interweaving appearances of organ verses (*pièces d'orgue*) and liturgical monody performed by a choir. Many scholars claim that French organ music, although not so well-documented as in other countries, should be paid as much attention as harpsichord music had already obtained. However, one must take into consideration the fact that this type of

repertoire was usually highly improvised, and, consequently, it was not printed and subsequently published, which makes it barely possible to recreate and analyze musicologically. The answer to the questions of how to perform a repertoire preserved to our times and how to improvise in the style of French liturgical organists of the last third of the 17th century seem to be the most important questions regarding the polyphonic music of this time that can be posed by researchers specializing in the field of so-called *Historically Documented Performance*.

The key factor to understanding the actual content of the manuscript analyzed is to comprehend the historical context of French polyphonic music in the late 17th century, with its own variety and its own development trends. After thoroughly researching this issue, I came to the conclusion that the main characteristic of the organ music performed in most of the Catholic churches in this country was the fact that it was quite conservative in its style (Aleksandrowicz). The conclusions drawn from critical analyses of different treatises suggest the predominant role of the polyphonic and counterpoint style, dating back to the end of the 16th century. This means that the texture and the style used by most organists playing liturgical music on the organ in the vast majority of Catholic temples scattered in various corners of Louis XIV's country were significantly different from the performing style that is currently most often identified with the French organists of the 17th century. The term *Parisian organ style* (in French: *style parisien*), as discussed in most of the music history publications and mentioned by the author of the manuscript addressed here, referred to the type of music performed by renowned organists-composers, such as Nivers, Lebègue or Boyvin, which was undoubtedly the most modern manner of playing during the liturgy at that time. We should remember, however, that this most modern performance trend was mainly associated with the music performed in the capital, and in the initial period it was completely unknown to provincial organists. Therefore, this new manner, the result of the post-tridentine renewal in liturgy, also influenced by French Gallicanism, should be first associated mainly with Parisian organ music.

It is still difficult to settle the question of when exactly these new manners became more widespread and when provincial organists, accustomed to conservative polyphonic playing manners, took a greater interest in the fresh trends born in Paris; however, without any doubt this innovative style was becoming more common at the end of the 17th century. The spread of a new type of "Parisian" model of organ construction around the kingdom in the last decades of the 17th century also conditioned the promotion of the new

performance style. This is due to the fact that the new manner was only possible on the instruments created according to the Parisian pattern⁴. In this context, the manuscript *Manière de toucher l'orgue* is one of the extremely rare sources proving interest in the new style among provincial organists.

The content of the manuscript discussed must therefore be analyzed in the context of the two different performing styles in French liturgical organ music: the new 'Parisian style' and the conservative playing manner popular among organists living outside the capital. The polarization of both styles is suggested in the title of the manuscript, implying that it includes remarks about the manners worked out by the Parisian masters. One must remember that when using the word "style" we do not mean a composing style but a performance style, i.e. the defined set of performance manners and conventions which were used particularly during polyphonic improvisations of organ verses. Hence, if we wish to properly understand the real meaning of the title of the manuscript, it should be translated as: *Organ performance manners regarding the style and its nuances currently practised in Paris*. It is highly probable that this manuscript could have been written by an organist who, while staying in Paris, wanted to learn in a manner Lebègue defined as "now being used in Paris" (*Les pièces d'orgues* III).

Manière de toucher l'orgue deals with the most important elements which characterized the new trend of liturgical organists: mainly a new type of music texture, a new way of organ registration and the matter of so-called *ornaments* (French *agrèments*). This last aspect is strongly emphasized throughout the whole content of the manuscript, so we can draw the conclusion that it is the ornaments that struck visitors from the province most⁵. The scale of the new stylistic changes was so great that the first author tried to describe it using many synonyms, sometimes not being able to find one, precise word. Even today, while analyzing some terms, we also need to con-

⁴ Most of the researchers of this issue believe that although the most important elements of the mentioned style appeared in 1665 at Nivers's *Livre d'Orgue contenant cent pièces de tous les tons de l'Église*, its full realization cannot be found until the collection ten years later: *Livre d'Orgue des huit tons de l'Église* (1675). In his last organ book, composed after building the new organ in the church of Saint-Sulpice (1675), we can already see very distinct elements of the dramatic style developed by Lully in his stage music (*tragédie lyrique*). This collection shows that the composer definitely abandoned the polyphonic style, which until this moment was the basis of the liturgical organ-playing of Parisian organists (Dufourcq 72, 75).

⁵ It should be added that the oldest 17th century French sources containing information on the so-called "ornaments" are the treatises of Marin Mersenne. In his *Traitéz de consonances, des dissonances* (354 ff.) we can find a discussion about vocal ornaments, and in *Traité des instrumens à cordes* (pp. 79-82) an explanation of the instrumental ornaments (lute).

sult dictionaries used at those times and study specialist books referring to these terms (Saint-Arroman *L'Interprétation de la Musique Française*). William Pruitt, who studied the manuscript nearly half a century ago, noticed this problem of terminological inconsistency. He remarked that (1) the first of the authors uses various terms for describing the same type of ornament (e.g. the terms *repetition*, *coulement* or *port de voix* generally, mean the same *ornament*, which today is linked to an Italian term, *appogiatura*); (2) he also noticed that musicians of that time used the same word for describing different types of *ornaments*, e.g. the word *agrément* could possibly indicate *mordant*, *trille* or *ornament* in the broadest sense of this term; (3) as used at that time, terminology could refer to a few types of *ornaments*, e.g. a *cadence*, a generally described embellishment used in a cadence (“Un traité d’interprétation” 100). It is worth noting that the first of the authors of *Manière de toucher l’orgue* does not employ specific terminological vocabulary, but rather uses describing adjectives (like *vivement*, *nettement*, etc.). This fact suggests some kind of lack of a strictly-defined set of terms among French musicians; also, it may show some degree of unwillingness to accept the more and more popular and international Italian terminology (Brossard). What is more, we can assume that this hyped-up descriptive approach while trying to write about *ornaments* (*agréments*) proves how subtle and difficult to define these new stylistic trends were in the organ performance worked out and promoted by Parisian organists.

From a historical perspective, the importance of *ornaments* in the liturgical music of the end of the 17th century cannot be surprising. The last three decades of that century were, especially in Paris, the highlight of all kind of decorativeness. This stems from the individual characteristics of French *classicism* (*Âge classique*), where aesthetic postulations stemmed from transformed general European Renaissance ideas. The Vitruvian paradigm, called *decorum rule*, survived in France much longer than in other European countries fully engaged in Baroque ideas⁶. The art of Louis XIV’s reign did not show the same tendency as in other countries, which focused on monumentalism and the variety of different forms. On the contrary, French art was characterized by focusing on nuances and subtleties. We cannot find any other such country where we were able to observe a similar shift from the *beauty* of proportion to the notion of *grace* or *gracefulness* (Tatarkiewicz 189). In music, this idea was fulfilled by the vast use of different *ornaments*.

⁶ The *decorum* rule remained one of the basic concepts in art of the entire 17th century in France (Poprzęcka and Ziemia 205).

The terminological inconsistencies the first author of the manuscript experienced while describing the new Parisian style could also be explained by another fact. Despite the presence in the last decades of the 17th century of certain generalizations in the notation and performance conventions of the ornaments, the manner of noting and executing these was not completely standardized at that time. The notation examples appearing in printed or manuscript composition and in theoretical treatises do not contain absolutely all signs used in contemporary practice. Also, it is worth mentioning that the performance practice of a given *ornament* differed in vocal and instrumental music, even though it was represented by the same sign (Cyr, *Style and performance* 107). Apart from the most fashionable, and to some extent standardized, embellishments such as *tremblements*, *coules* or *harpegements*, we need to remember that many composers and performers used their own notation or realized noted *ornaments* in their own way (Broude 25). What is more, many terms were practically interchangeable, e.g. the expression *pincement* used in *Manière de toucher l'orgue* could mean both *mordent* and *trille* (Pruitt, "Un traité d'interprétation" 100). The *ornament* of the *port de voix* type was also often named *cheute*, *chitte*, *coulé*, *accent* while in Italian terminology it was known as a group called *accenti e trilli* (Neumann 32). This is why the late 17th century French notification of *ornaments* is considered as the last stage in the development of the Renaissance counterpoint technique of *diminution* and did not match "mensural" notation concepts. Author of the discussed manuscript still understands the technique of *diminution* as it was perceived in the 16th century and his view on this technique is therefore different from the definition of Brossard's *Dictionnaire*, article: "Tirade" (Pruitt, "Un traité d'interprétation" 101). The main reason for adding additional sounds to the already-existing notes was to achieve "these nuances, unable to be perceived just from sheer mensural notation". The general rule behind their practical implementation was so called *good taste* (*bon goût*). So, while analyzing French music of that time we must remember that it was not the mere *playing* (*jouer*) of the notes (strictly executing the rhythmic values) that was the most important but what really mattered in this music was the subtle keyboard *touch* (*toucher*), thanks to which, the music started to be treated in a more sensual way. There is no doubt that at the end of the 17th century the French performance of keyboard music focused more on aesthetic experience and intellectual tasting, which were completely different "parameters" of musical work than the height of the sounds, their mensural duration and the counterpoint's structure. Taking all this into account we now can better understand the first author's remarks

on organ playing, who refers to such a way of performance where the most important is *taking care of details and subtleness* (*toucher l'orgue dans toute la propreté et la délicatesse*). In the context of the aestheticism development during the whole 16th and 17th century we notice that the French manner of using *ornaments* (*agrément*) was one of the paths of this development. as Umberto Eco wrote:

During the Renaissance the so-called “Grand Theory”, according to which Beauty consists in the proportion of the parts, reached a high level of perfection. At the same time, however, in Renaissance culture and mentality, there came into being centrifugal forces whose thrust was towards a disquieting, nebulous and surprising Beauty. (Eco 2014)

Also, the result of the progress in maths and nature sciences in the Renaissance, helped to define this paradigm of beauty. On the other hand, the same progress helped to discover new rules and harmonies much more complicated and disturbing. We could assume that in the context of French music these “disturbing harmonies” turned into sensualistic *ornaments* (*agrément*). In order to illustrate the variety of *ornaments* implementation in practice, where the basic fact was the issue of *good taste*, we can analyze the two kinds of *agrément*s mentioned in *Manière de toucher l'orgue*. The following examples, portrayed by means of the modern music notation, show the possible melodic and rhythmical realizations of the *port de voix* (see Example 2) and *coulé* (see Example 3).

The image contains five musical examples labeled a) through e).
 a) A single melodic line on a five-line staff with a treble clef, showing a sequence of six quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4.
 b) A single melodic line on a five-line staff with a treble clef, showing a sequence of six quarter notes with slurs connecting them: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4.
 c) A single melodic line on a five-line staff with a treble clef, showing a quarter note C4 followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note D4.
 d) A single melodic line on a five-line staff with a treble clef, showing a sequence of six quarter notes with slurs and fermatas: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4.
 e) A single melodic line on a five-line staff with a treble clef, showing a sequence of six quarter notes with slurs and fermatas, including a triplet of eighth notes at the end: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4.

Example 2. *Port de voix* and its realization according to Frederick Neumann (49-50)

The melodic scheme: the progression of the sounds without the *ornament* (a) and with the *ornament* marked by a sign ♦ (b). The rhythmic scheme: basic movement of the sounds without the *ornament* (c), different *ornamentations* options (d) and different movement options in the *Port de voix* and *Coulé* (e).



Example 3. *Coulé* and its realization, according to Frederick Neumann (50-51)

Melodic scheme: the progression of the sounds without the *ornament* (a) and with the *ornament* marked by a sign ♦ (b). Rhythmic scheme: basic movement of the sounds without the *ornament* (c), different *ornamentations* options (d).

The extremely important role of *ornaments* in ‘Parisian’ liturgical organ music is confirmed by remarks that can be found in the collections of organ masses and other liturgical compositions published at the end of the 17th century. Nicolas Lebègue, the organist at St Mederic church in Paris, highlighted in the title of his *Pièces d’orgues* (1676) this important status of *agrèments* and remarked: “by creating these compositions I wanted to give the example of the style which is now being performed in Paris” (Lebègue III). He understood the use of *ornaments* as completely dependent on the *good taste* of a performer. Nicolas Gigault, publishing his *Livre de musique* in 1682 wrote: “I marked the places where tremblements should appear by means of a small cross, which should prove helpful for unfamiliar musicians” [unfamiliar, of course, with the new performing techniques] (Gigault, *Livre de musique dédié à la très Ste. Vierge* IV). The same author, three years later, observed:

in some of the pieces I marked the places where the musician should perform ports de voix but it can be carried out in other places which were not specifically marked and depended on the 14

In 1688, André Raison wrote:

the organists, taking advantage of the fact that in recent years French organ builders have significantly increased the number of voices and keyboards in the process of organ construction, started to play (*toucher*) in a much more sophisticated and pleasant way. (Raison foreword)

One should remember an important historical factor connected with the new liturgical style mentioned in *Manière de toucher l'orgue*. Is this new trend only the symptom of musical and aesthetic expression, or should we treat it as part of some wider phenomenon observed in the field of so called "church culture"? Taking into account contemporary theological and pastoral conventions in the model of religion at that time, we may deduce that the reference to so-called good taste had a much deeper meaning than merely that connected with "new aestheticism." Since, according to the post-tridentine renewal, organ music was an essential element constituting the divine service (Carter and Butt 284), so, in this way, more or less improvised organ playing could be compared to the sermon given by a preacher during the mass. It means that the essence of the new style could be linked to the new approach which appeared in the preaching practice. The liturgy in Louis XIV's France did not focus mainly on the rhetoric, so important in the Renaissance, and not on the rich, ornamental Baroque approach and rhetorical emotionality of religious speeches, which stemmed from the post-tridentine movement. French preaching did not attach that importance to the rule of balance between form and content (the decorum rule); it did not need expansive rhetoric and the wealth of rhetorical figures so characteristic of the 'militant church' approach. The 17th century in France was the age of reason (*siècle de raison*), and the subsequent century was described as the Enlightenment (*siècle de lumière*). The French religious art of oratory, with Bousset as its main representative, aimed at subtler and more sophisticated emotions (Villari 180). In 1702, Blaise Gisbert, one of the most recognized Jesuit preachers of that time, remarked: "religious and secular oratory is the same type of art. The only difference is the subject matter, but the art remains the same" (4).

(...) to create pleasure: this is the duty of both the Christian and the secular orator. If the aim of the speech is only to create a rational argument or to focus only on faith, it will never become “pleasant”. What is more, it may even become repulsive. The listeners will stop following the content, not paying attention to the words. No one will listen to it. However, if the speech starts to affect listeners’ imagination, then they will immediately start to listen more carefully. (Gisbert 17-18)

While speaking about “creating pleasure”, which involves some kind of “ornamenting factor”, Gisbert means “metaphors, symbols, descriptions, tales, dialogues, comparisons”, i.e. those elements of speech which “make the speech pleasant to listen to” (19). These are techniques which do not come from following the rules: they are an element intended to make a work of art (and in this case a sermon) pleasant for its recipients. If we wish to detect these subtleties connected with religious and aesthetic experiences, we need to distance ourselves from the romantic approach, full of emotional exaltation. We need to analyze this area of aesthetic pleasure taking into account the time when the emotional disparity of the musical composition was not so intensive, contrasting and polarized. This does not mean that 17th century art lacked an emotional component; on the contrary, it was rather subtler; it did not need that much exuberance and intensity, as might be observed in subsequent periods. The target on which the piece of art was to concentrate was, after all, according to Gisbert, the recipient’s imagination (*imagination*). The same author stresses, however, that this area cannot be excessively emphasized:

the fact that we relate to a listener’s imagination to influence him is not by any means wrong. Well, it’s really advisable. We shouldn’t, however, cross some boundaries, because reason is always superior to our imagination. (Gisbert 21)

He comes to the conclusion that “a sermon is a kind of feast and everything involved in preaching should serve the listener” (Gisbert 69-70). Gisbert warns against not reversing the proper order, i.e. he does not want a situation when a faithful participant of liturgy, after listening to a badly-prepared sermon “leaves the feast hungry”. The reversal of choosing “ornaments” in a sermon is compared by him to distortion in proper *Christian eloquence* (*éloquence chrétienne*).

In this context, it can be said that for the Parisian organist, playing alternately (*alternatim*) with the monodic choir, the appropriate selection of *ornaments* (*agréments*) was the essence of the above-mentioned *Christian eloquence*. We have already mentioned that the proper choice of *ornaments* was not officially standardized in the last decades of the 17th century; also, we

need to remember that the core of the French performing style was the sublime *touch* (*toucher*) of the keyboard. Thanks to this, performed music started to significantly differ from its written version and began to incorporate some sensualistic sense. *Manière de toucher l'orgue* was written between 1670 and 1685; at that time the new trends had not yet turned into more standardized schemes, a fact that can be observed in the first decades of the 18th century. Indeed, the first sets of *ornaments* put into tables appeared in the Nivers (1665) and Chambonnières (1670) treatises (Ponsford 58) but these do not include all the nuances and versions of the French embellishments used in liturgical organ music. During the reign of Louis XIV, despite some existing trends and principles in notation and the realization of *ornaments*, one needs to remember that these notations did not show specific, fixed types of realizations. On the contrary, they were always perceived in relation to this idea of the *eloquence* of an organist, who actively took part in the liturgy.

How might we describe the style of performance presented in *Manière de toucher l'orgue*? Undoubtedly, its content matches the main trends in French musical aesthetics at the end of the 17th century, where the most essential characteristics, according to Brossard, were *naturalness, softness and subtleness* (*naturel, coulant, tendre*). This aestheticism differs from that seen in counterpoint instrumental compositions named in France as *fantaisie* or *recherche*, and mentioned, for example, in Mersenne's writings (164; bk. 2). This is also not the style which was described as *stylus phantasticus*, introduced in 1650 by Kircher (*Musurgia universalis*), because this term refers to "free" compositions, *created without accompanying text and without cantus firmus*; compositions which, despite their theoretical "freedom", were still composed in the counterpoint technique (585; bk. 7). Also, the style referred to in *Manière de toucher l'orgue* does not match the typical division into *stile antico* and *stile moderno* so typical of early 17th century music, which is not surprising, because of the fact that this kind of division was not generally accepted in France. Next, we cannot list it within the so-called *scholarly style* (*style maîtrisien*) (Leon 143 ff.), quite popular during the whole century; it was abundantly used in the majority of the French polyphonic liturgical repertoire, before the advent of so-called *Versailles style* (Anthony 203-204). In addition, we cannot compare the style of the manuscript with the retrospective style called *stylus ecclesiasticus*, so thoroughly described by Scacchi (Bianconi 48). So, the question arises, what trend or what style might match the one presented by the author of the manuscript? It is worth mentioning that *Manière de toucher l'orgue* does not discuss composing tech-

nique (*res facta*) but is rather about a style of performance, i.e. about a new type of creating or improvising polyphonic organ verses (*pièces d'orgue*). This is why these manners were not included in Brossard's classification, defining his contemporary music within nine different styles⁷. Furthermore, we learn from his *Dictionary* that "the music played in church is completely different from theatrical or chamber music" (Brossard).

After analyzing the manuscript, we might get the impression that the new style of playing preferred by the Parisian organists—at least from the aesthetic perspective—was quite similar to harpsichord music. The new manners match perfectly with the general trends in musical aesthetics at the end of the 17th century, which are usually associated with harpsichord music and French stage music. Additionally, even though the very idea of using *ornaments* (*agréments*) in music was not typical only of the French musical culture (English *ornament*, German *Verzierungen*, Italian *ornamento*, *fioritura*), we must bear in mind that the performance manners described in *Manière de toucher l'orgue* were completely different. The basis of the realization of the *ornaments* here was the idea of so-called *good taste* (*bon goût*). The key word which implies the quintessence of new performance innovations is, by no means, the French word *toucher* (literally: *to touch*). At the moment of writing the manuscript, the stylistics of French organ music was still being developed, because it was connected with technical development and the possibilities of organ building (Dufourcq 163-164). The development reached its full height in the 18th century. Its essence was well-expressed by François Couperin, who in 1733 pointed out that there is *a difference between notation-written music and its proper performance* (Couperin, *Preface*). While analyzing the historical context of 17th century French art, we reach the conclusion that the performance practice expressed in *Manière de toucher l'orgue* cannot be identified with the style of harpsichord music, understood as somehow "implemented" within organ music. Indeed, it is possible to find some influences and elements of harpsichord or even lute texture, but we need to look at this as another manifestation of 'the spirit' of the French *Great Century*. New ideas influenced many fields of culture, from architecture to blacksmithing, iron-working, marquetry, bookbinding, goldsmithing and fashion, and also many secular fields of life, but they also affected preaching, liturgy and organ music.

⁷ These different musical styles define Brossard as follows: *dramatico* (*recitativo*), *ecclesiastico*, *motectico*, *madrigalesco*, *hyorchematico*, *symphoniaco*, *melismatico*, *phantastico*, *choraico*. See: S. de Brossard, *Dictionnaire de musique*, Paris 1703, article: *Stilo*.

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PRAKTYKA WYKONAWCZA FRANCUSKIEJ MUZYKI ORGANOWEJ XVII WIEKU
WEDŁUG ANONIMOWEGO RĘKOPISU *MANIÈRE DE TOUCHER L'ORGUE*
(OK. 1670-1685)

Streszczenie

Niniejszy artykuł dotyczy praktyki wykonawczej francuskiej muzyki organowej XVII wieku. Punktem wyjścia do poszukiwań w tym zakresie jest anonimowy rękopis *Manière de toucher l'orgue dans toute la propreté et la délicatesse qui est en usage aujourd'hui à Paris* (Maniery wykonawcze w grze na organach z uwzględnieniem stylu i subtelności stosowanych obecnie w Paryżu) przechowywany w Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Paris (ms. 3042, fol. 100-119). Manuskrypt ten został spisany w latach 1670-1685 przez dwóch nieznanych dziś z nazwiska autorów działających w środowisku paryskich organistów liturgicznych. Największą wartością tego źródła są informacje dotyczące nowych tendencji w grze organowej, jakie pojawiły się w tym mieście pod koniec XVII stulecia. Artykuł ten jest kontynuacją badań podjętych przez Williama Pruitta, który w roku 1986 dokonał krótkiej analizy rękopisu, zogniskowanej jednak na aspektach czysto faktograficznych. W niniejszym artykule, wykorzystującym metodę hermeneutyczno-muzyczną, zagadnienia wykonawcze omówione w *Manière de toucher l'orgue* zostały osadzone i zreinterpretowane w znacznie szerszym kontekście.

Słowa kluczowe: praktyka wykonawcza muzyki organowej; XVII-wieczna muzyka francuska; francuska muzyka organowa.

THE PERFORMANCE PRACTICE OF ORGAN-PLAYING
IN 17TH CENTURY FRANCE ACCORDING TO THE ANONYMOUS MANUSCRIPT
MANIÈRE DE TOUCHER L'ORGUE (C.1670-1685)

Summary

This article concerns the performance practice of organ-playing in 17th century France. The starting point is the anonymous manuscript *Manière de toucher l'orgue dans toute la propreté et la délicatesse qui est en usage aujourd'hui à Paris* (*Organ performance manners regarding the style and its nuances currently practised in Paris*), written probably between 1670 and 1685. The greatest value of this manuscript is that it provides important information about the new trends in liturgical organ-playing introduced during the late 17th century in Paris. This article is a development of the ideas sketched by William Pruitt (1986). His analysis, however, was limited to factual aspects and an overall description of the source. This article, using the hermeneutic research method, takes a broader look at the practical issues that may be useful for music historians and for organists who want to deepen their historical knowledge about early French organ music.

Key words: performance practice of organ-playing; French music in the 17th century; French organ music.